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ABSTRACT

Primary health and nutrition have been linked with communication in a variety of well-publicized projects. This partnership between communication and nutrition was made necessary by the confrontation between an expanded demand for services and limited resources for meeting the demand. Senior officials have a substantial role to play in seeing that their programs gain the full benefit of what an effective communication program can offer by accepting the responsibilities to: (1) examine, at the planning stage of any program, the implications in it for communication; (2) insist that communication or education people work within the framework of a communication strategy; and (3) provide communication resources. In planning, steps should include policy formation and development of a comprehensive strategy to meet program goals. With an understanding of the policy and comprehensive strategies that govern a project's overall efforts, communications specialists should start a process that includes analysis, strategy, implementation, evaluation, and next-step planning. Program officials should insist that the top communication managers deal explicitly with the elements of principal objectives, best tentative solutions, audiences, media channels, themes/messages, and schedules. A summary chart of communication and education techniques includes methods, their advantages and disadvantages and comments. (LMM)

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COMMUNICATION PLANNING FOR EFFECTIVE NUTRITION PROGRAMS

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COMMUNICATION PLANNING FOR EFFECTIVE NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Royal D. Colle

Primary health and nutrition have been linked with communication in a variety of well publicized projects. Nutrition people in nine island nations in the South Pacific have used a communication satellite to carry out a maternal and infant nutrition program; videotape and television sets are being used in the Philippines to support nutrition workers; from Indonesia to Guatemala, audio cassettes are bringing health, nutrition and agricultural information to rural families. The list could go on and on. We are witnessing a situation where communication technologies have taken their places along side food supplements, oral rehydration salts, inoculations, rehabilitation centers, and home gardens as major ingredients in health and nutrition programs.

The pattern that led to this partnership of communication and nutrition is familiar: expanded demand for services has been confronted by limited resources. Greater priority has been given to preventive approaches. Paraprofessionals such as community health workers or nutrition aides have become the front-line service providers. Meanwhile, the array of communication resources available for development purposes has expanded. There are high technology tools run by experts (for example, the communication satellites, computers and color television). And there are less sophisticated channels that can be effectively used by the non-technician: cassettes, puppets and community workers. Recently, for example, modestly trained teams from Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal won prizes in a Worldview International Foundation competition for producing videotape programs on development issues. These were not done by professional broadcasters, but by people associated with agriculture, health and nutrition programs.

Implications for Health and Nutrition Officials

The success in using communication media to support nutrition projects does not mean that decision-makers should run out and buy a communication satellite or an audio cassette to solve the problems of providing effective

health and nutrition services. But senior officials do have a substantial role to play in seeing that their programs gain the full benefit of what an effective communication program can offer. To do this, they need to accept three responsibilities: (1) examine, at the planning stage of any program, the implications in it for communication; (2) insist that communication or nutrition education people work within the framework of a communication strategy; and (3) provide communication resources. We will examine each of these in greater detail.

Planning: Policy

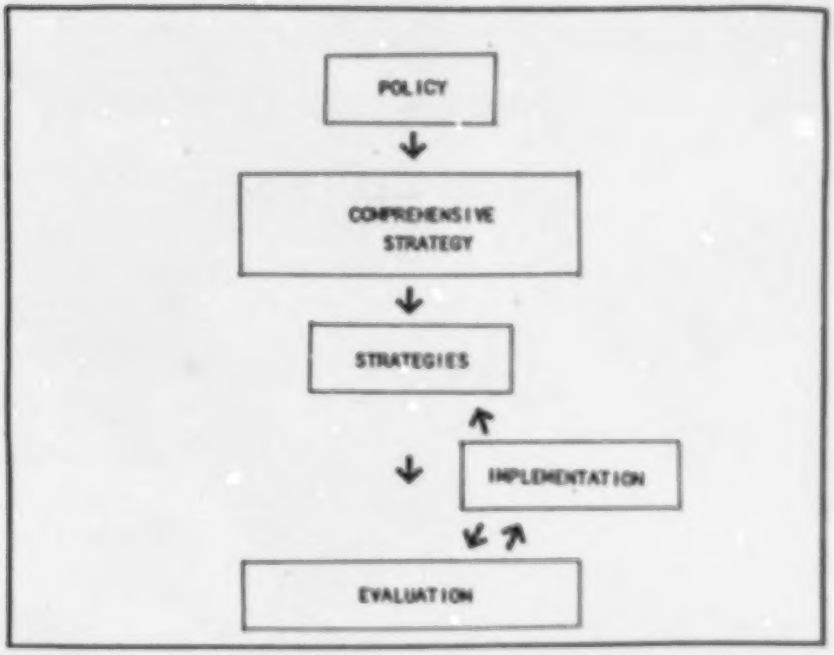
It is important to be specific about the word communication and where a communication program begins. In this paper, we consider communication to be the deliberate process of sharing information in a systematic way. We use the word sharing to convey the idea that information may flow "top-down", "bottom-up" or laterally, and that a strategy may involve any of these.

We are concerned particularly with the use of mass media and interpersonal channels to achieve explicit communication goals. These goals often are related to broader policies and to more comprehensive program strategies that involve other sectors.[1] It is at the policy level where the sequence of events begins that leads to an effective communication program. (See Illustration No. 1.)

A policy provides the political force that drives a program. It usually includes: an acknowledgment that a problem needs attention (for example, malnutrition in rural areas), a goal to be reached, and a commitment to use resources to reach the goal. Policies are usually set by politicians or boards of directors, with details on implementation left to others. Some examples of policy goals (in highly simplified form) are: increase the nutritional well-being of the poor people of the country; provide primary health care to all the people; increase the income of the farmers; reduce the rate of population growth; change the nation from a rice importer to a rice exporter; achieve self-sufficiency in food; etc. Illustration 2 provides an example of a nutrition policy developed in the South Pacific.

[1] We use the word "sector" to refer to an organized body of personnel, procedures and activities devoted to a specialized field or task, such as health, nutrition, agriculture, education, communication, research, training, etc.

Illustration 1



Planning: Comprehensive Strategy

After the policy is set, the comprehensive strategy starts to form. This is where planners or senior civil service officials may look at the feasibility of various alternatives for reaching the policy goals. In most programs, a variety of sectors may be involved. Inevitably communication will be one of those sectors.

The way this comprehensive strategy operates is well illustrated in the Masagana 99 rice production effort in the Philippines. The policy was to make the nation a rice-exporter rather than a rice-importer. From among the approaches that might have been used, the planners decided to increase rice production. To translate the policy into action, the government developed a comprehensive strategy concentrated on four sectors: a new rice technology, a new credit system for farmers, an enhanced agricultural extension system and

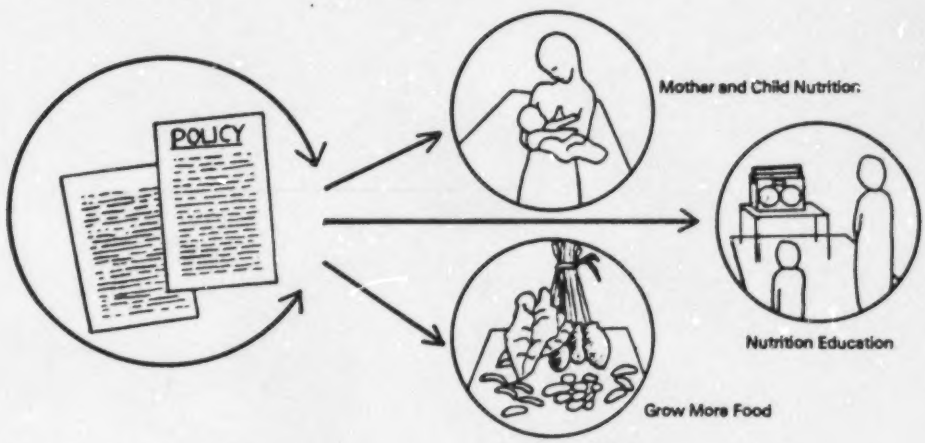
Illustration 2

Fiji Food and Nutrition
NEWSLETTER

PUBLISHED BY THE FIJI NATIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION COMMITTEE JANUARY 1982 VOLUME 2 NUMBER 4.

POLICY READY TO GO

The draft food and nutrition policy for Fiji will be presented to Cabinet shortly. It is hoped that the final version of the policy will be presented to Cabinet for approval by April. Regular readers of this newsletter will know that this policy has been in preparation since June, 1980, when the National Food and Nutrition Development Programme (NFNDP) started.



Why is a Policy Needed?

For a number of years Government has been concerned about Fiji's growing nutritional problems, and the rising cost of food imports. Between 1975 and 1980 the number of children with clinical malnutrition seen at Suva's CWM Hospital has increased from 87 to 178. At the same time fewer babies are being breast fed and undernuurition is widespread (see April 1981 issue). Up to 40% of women attending antenatal clinic are anaemic. Goitre caused by a shortage of iodine in the diet is common in many inland areas of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. As more people change both their lifestyle and their diet, diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease are becoming serious problems in Fiji.

Food imports have also grown rapidly in recent years, and their costs have increased from $38.5 million in 1975 to $65 million in 1980. Fiji now imports 43% of its energy needs and 60% of its protein needs. The cost of imports of rice, beef and butter have all increased by more than 5 times since 1970, despite the fact that all these foods are produced locally. Every year Fiji imports more than it exports, making it difficult to find the foreign currency needed to pay for extra imports.

What Are The Aims?

1. To increase the supply of food within the country, which will help to create more jobs in the rural areas.

2. To reduce malnutrition where it exists, using local foods whenever possible.

How has the Policy been developed?

Since the middle of 1980 NFNDP has been working with the National Food and Nutrition Committee and Government to collect information on the food supply and nutrition situation in Fiji. A review of existing information showed that there was a need for more research. As a result a number of surveys were carried out, the results of several of these have appeared in this newsletter.

In October 1981 the draft policy was presented at a seminar to key government officials, and the recommended programmes were discussed. As a result of this seminar a number of changes and additions were made to the policy.

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an ambitious communication and promotion program. Like pieces of a puzzle, they fit together to make a comprehensive strategy for reaching a goal[2].

One can also see the implication of different comprehensive strategies for very similar goals by looking at the official government plans for reducing the rate of population growth in two nations: Pakistan and Egypt. While the policy goals are the same, their approaches (comprehensive strategies) for reaching their goals are quite different. Pakistan emphasizes health and welfare sectors; Egypt's nine point plan includes agriculture, health, employment for women, industrialization and social security. Both include a communication sector. (See Illustrations 3 and 4).

It is at this stage of planning when senior level officials and planners need to be alert about how a communication component could strengthen their programs. Sometimes it means re-examing conventional practices. For example, health and nutrition experts who are involved in planning may need to escape from their conventional thinking about service delivery to explore alternatives. An example could be the use of paraprofessionals.[3] While there is a considerable acceptance of various kinds of village level workers as an extension of the primary health care system, there is somewhat less success with them than is usually expected. For example, Thailand's Dr. Amorn Nondasuta indicates that about 60 percent of village health volunteers in his country are effective. That means a large proportion are <u>not</u> effective. The situation in Thailand is repeated throughout the world, and the high attrition rates in these programs result in inefficient use of resources. There are

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[2] "Paraprofessionals" here refers to the kinds of village health worker who generally has less than a year of professional training, and who has a large amount of day-to-day autonomy in providing health and nutrition services to rural low income populations. This definition and some of the discussion which follows are elaborated in two references:

1. Royal D. Colle, "Tasks Required for Technical Management and Supervision in Rural Health and Development Programs," in <u>The Training and Support of Primary Health Case Workers</u>, National Council for International Health, Washington, D.C. 1981.

2. Milton J. Esman, Royal D. Colle, Norman T. Uphoff, et al., "Paraprofessionals in Rural Development, A State-of-the-Art," Center for International Studies, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y. 1980.

[3] The "Masagana 99" story has been told in a variety of publications; it is dramatically portrayed in the film "Promoting A Miracle."

Illustration 3

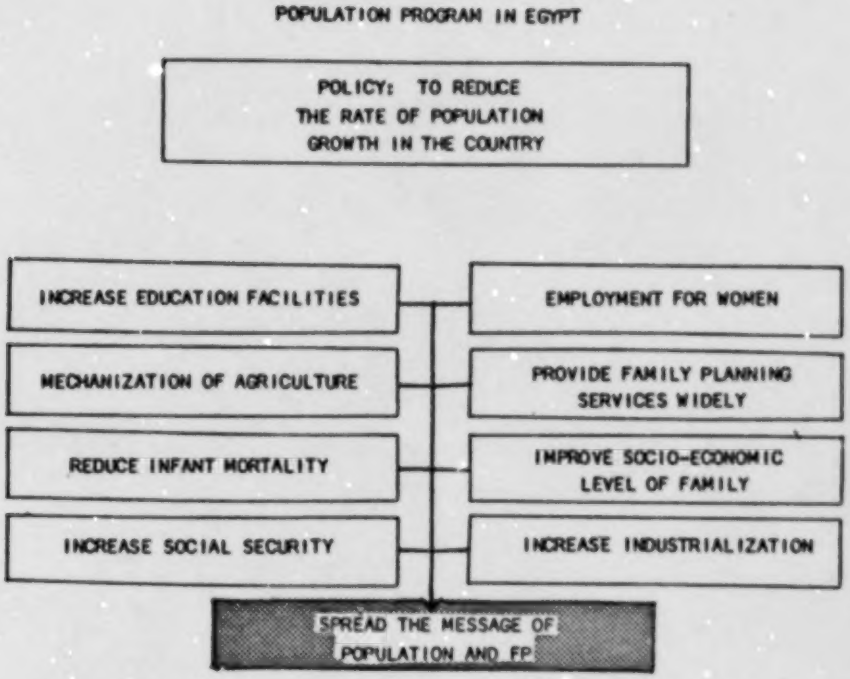
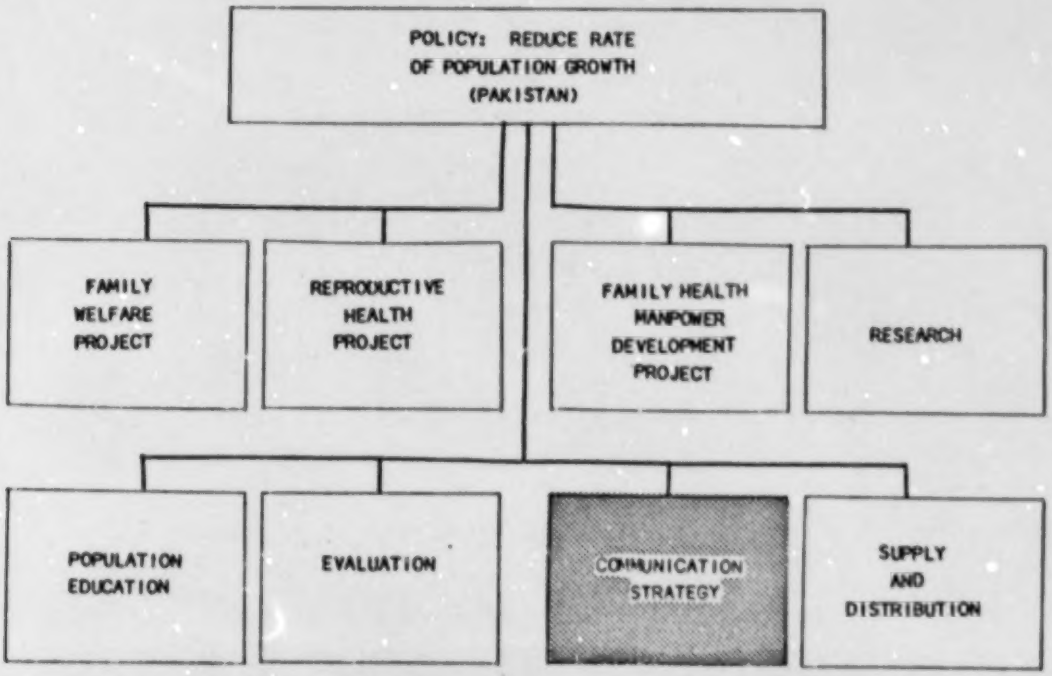

POPULATION PROGRAM IN EGYPT
POLICY: TO REDUCE THE RATE OF POPULATION GROWTH IN THE COUNTRY
INCREASE EDUCATION FACILITIES
EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN
MECHANIZATION OF AGRICULTURE
PROVIDE FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES WIDELY
REDUCE INFANT MORTALITY
IMPROVE SOCIO-ECONOMIC LEVEL OF FAMILY
INCREASE SOCIAL SECURITY
INCREASE INDUSTRIALIZATION
SPREAD THE MESSAGE OF POPULATION AND FP

Illustration 4



various reasons for ineffectiveness "drop outs", but the one that emerges prominently is the lack of adequate supervision for community workers.

Inevitably when people think about supervision, they think of face-to-face contact. If, however, they were to break "supervision" up into its component parts, alternative approaches for doing supervision begin to emerge. What if, in planning a project using community nutrition volunteers, officials were to look at the tasks to be accomplished by supervision? From an analysis of programs using paraprofessionals, we developed a list of some of the functions of supervision. In reading the list, an official should answer two key questions for each item: Is this important to my program? What are the alternative ways this can be done?

Here is the list:

1. **Legitimation.** Convincing villagers that the village health worker who was once one of them now has the skills to handle matters of life and death.
2. **Protecting role integrity.** Helping define the limits of the demands that can be made on paraprofessionals.
3. **Motivation.** Sustaining enthusiasm for work where rewards, compensation and isolation often make the original glamour of the job fade.
4. **Monitoring and control.** Checking on performance and collecting data related to services.
5. **Education and guidance.** Improving and expanding the services provided.
6. **Technical assistance.** Providing help for specific cases.
7. **Linkage.** Helping paraprofessionals establish and maintain contact with human and material resources vital to the task.
8. **Evaluation.** Making judgments concerning paraprofessionals' performance.

Some of these functions can be performed by other than face-to-face supervision. It should be evident that radio, video and audio cassettes, or television could play a major role in at least five of these. This would influence the planning for on-site visits by professional staff and for other logistics resources. It seems appropriate to propose that in many ways,

supervision is communication. Thus, in planning a village level nutrition program using field workers, officials should think not only of conventional supervisors such as health personnel, but they should also consider the potential role of a communication sector. This is an example of the official's first responsiblity in making communication effective: examining at the planning stage how and when communication fits into the overall program.

It is at this stage of planning when senior level officials and planners need to be alert about how a communication component could strengthen their programs. Sometimes it means re-examining conventional practices. For example, to develop effective communication nutrition improvement and related programs, the communication factor must be built in at the beginning of the overall planning when major decisions are being made concerning approaches to be used and resources to be allocated.

Working Within A Communication Strategy: the Second Responsibility

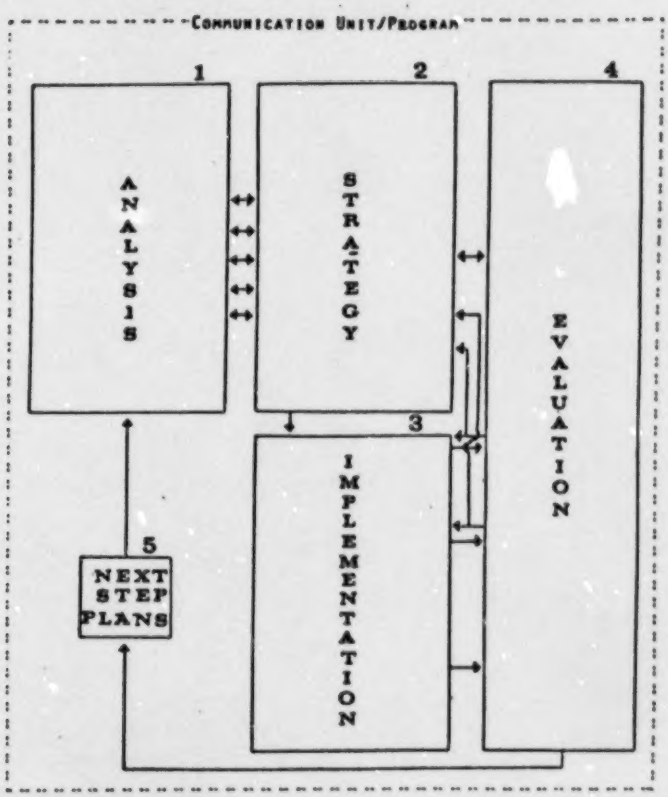
Several years ago, a government of a Latin American nation undertook a major nationwide nutrition program. Quite properly, mass media and interpersonal communication components were included in the overall planning. However, these were carried out by two different agencies. The mass communication people launched an extensive media campaign that did not match the interpersonal communication being done in towns and villages by community nutrition and health workers. Nor had those front-line people been alerted to what was being done by the mass media. The result: the nutrition communication phase of the project was a disaster. Resources were wasted; morale was destroyed. And the victims were not only the families who should have benefited from the program, but professional people throughout the system, from senior nutrition officials to community health workers. There was no strategy.

All sectors in the comprehensive strategy have their own individual strategies whether it's research, training, communication, distribution or other major activity. Program leaders should insist that such strategies be made explicit. There are several major advantages to doing this with the communication sector. For example, a communication strategy

- o provides a blue print for action, showing where the communication sector is suppose to be heading and when
- o helps leaders examine and plan for resource needs
- o forces leaders to set priorities, because everything that might be done cannot be done at the same time, especially with limited resources
- o helps co-workers and staff understand where their efforts fit into the communication program and the overall scheme
- o promotes coordination within the communication component and among the sectors in the comprehensive strategy

What might senior persons in nutrition programs expect of the communication sector in developing a strategy? First they should expect those responsible for the communication sector to understand the policy and comprehensive strategy that govern the overall effort. With this background, the communication specialist should start a five-step process that includes:

Illustration 5



The analysis (Step 1) must clearly identify the communication "programmatic" problems. Supervision was an example discussed earlier. In the Masagana 99 case, it was gaining farmer acceptance and compliance with new agricultural programs. In population programs, it's often a problem of closing the gap between knowledge and practice of family planning.

Analysis of the problem(s) should include careful examination of the target group, the channels available and their capacities,[4] and whatever additional background or "situational" information is available that will aid in making intelligent decisions. This includes demographic information on the populations involved, taboos, data on previous communication programs, community social structure and typical life styles, availability of resources, transportation, what the population needs and wants to know, and what their priorities are. In many cases this step will include traveling to communities to talk to people and to observe conditions in the community; systematically gathering data (e.g., research); contacting specialists (such as those in agriculture or advertising); and reading reports and other documents available from ministries, international agencies and libraries.[5] From this array of material, a number of alternative approaches to the communication problems can be proposed, along with reasonable estimates of their advantages, disadvantages and general consequences.

The communication specialist should be able to use this analysis to generate a strategy (Step 2). That communication strategy should be laid out on paper so it can be reviewed by program officials and representatives of related sectors. Putting it on paper however has two dangers. The first danger is that people may think the strategy is fixed for the life of the project. A strategy must be dynamic for two major reasons: (1) formative evaluation may reveal flaws or suggest alternative actions and (2) the

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[4] A sample list of typically available media, including their main advantages and disadvantages, appears in the Appendix of this paper under the title Summary Chart of Communication and Education Techniques.

[5] Najma, Rizvi, in another workshop paper, suggests some useful techniques for obtaining information for the kind of analysis that is essential in the development of a communication strategy. See: "The Use of Ethnography in the Development and Communication of Messages for Modifying Food Behavior," in the Proceedings of The Asian Regional Workshop on Effective Communication for Nutrition in Primary Health, Bangkok, 1983.

situation on which the strategy was originally based is constantly changing--especially if the strategy is successful.

The second danger is that staff confuse designing a strategy with actually carrying out a communication program. The strategy is not the final product and has no value unless it is executed.

Strategy Elements

Following are the kinds of elements that program officials should insist be dealt with explicitly by the top managers in the communication sector. Anything less means that the overall program could be jeopardized.

1. **Principal objectives.** The strategy should begin with the principal communication objectives. Some may be quite general, others may be specific enough to be quantifiable. Those objectives that are quantifiable can be used in developing the summative evaluation. The following list (Illustration 6), taken from a health project, suggests the variety of objectives that might appear in a strategy. Note that some of these could be translated in quantifiable objectives by inserting the number or proportion of people and operationalizing such terms as "supportive social climate."

2. **Best tentative solutions.** From among those potential approaches identified in the analysis, the communication expert must propose one or several which are most appropriate for the principal objectives. It might be stated, for example, that mass media will be used to build awareness and a climate of acceptance for a new food, while community health workers will concentrate on persuasion and demonstrations in meetings with small groups and families in villages. But the approaches will be integrated.

3. **Audiences.** All audiences should be identified with an explicit statement as to why each is important to the strategy. Often these are clearly specified in the objectives; however, there may be intermediate persons who need to be reached in order to reach a specific target group. For example, to reach high level officials, it may be necessary to enlist the support of persons working in the mass media. Or children may be used as

Illustration 6

HEALTH PROJECT

SPECIFIC COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES

1. Change people's attitudes about the desirable family size.
2. Inform, educate, and motivate families so they will follow good maternal and child health practices, and will plan their families
3. Inform people about the availability of maternal and child health (MCH) and family planning (FP) services so that they will know where to get assistance, and so that more effective use will be made of medical clinics.
4. Provide reassurance and support for people who use contraceptive practices, so that they will continue in their use.
5. Support the training of the health staffs of public agencies so they can be effective sources and conveyors of information as well as services for the publics with whom they have contact.
6. Give communication support to the community promoters who do face-to-face motivation, so that their efforts will be both efficient and effective.
7. Create a supportive social climate for the discussion and practice of family planning.
8. Create sensitivity and support among leaders, influentials, and decision-makers for the goals of the MCH/FP project.

channels to reach parents. Or local leaders to reach village men[6]. Some of our experience in India taught us that Indian farmers' resistance to planting new seed varieties could be traced to their wives, who favored the texture of food prepared using traditional varieties.

[6]The use of the word "audience" and "target groups" implies a top-down model for diffusing information. This is not to ignore the potential of indigenous knowledge in the fields of nutrition and health. But a nutrition agency may need to collect and validate that information and then diffuse it from the validating agency. Also developing a strategy and identifying audiences or publics does not preclude an approach in which community participation is stressed.

4. Media/ Channels. In the analysis section, it was important to systematically list all the media available. To this should be added those which might be introduced since innovative uses of media such as "nutrivans"[7] and audio cassettes[8] are unlikely to be suggested by identifying only the media existing in a rural community. The task here is to use appropriate criteria for selecting from among those possibilities. Some of the criteria include: appropriateness for the audience, initial and continuing costs, technical support ("infrastructure") required, opportunities for participation, etc. Various media have characteristics which make them more appropriate than others for com munication with audiences. Illustration 7 indicates some factors which influence media selection.

Illustration 7

MEDIA SELECTION*

1. Certain media have better outreach than others.
2. Certain media are more amendable to local control than others.
3. Certain media are more complex to use than others.
4. Certain media cost much less than others.
5. Certain media are more suited to providing a given type of information than others.
6. Certain media are better at attracting and holding the audience's attention than others.
7. Certain media are more dependent on special audience abilities for understanding.
8. Certain media may lack credibility with special populations.
9. Certain media are more participatory than others.
10. Certain media have political advantages over others.

*Adapted from H.E. Perret, Applied Communications Technology in Rural Development, Academy for Educational Development, Washington, 1976.

[7]Solon, Mercedes, A., et al. "An Evaluation of the Effects of a Community System on the Knowledge of Mothers and Nutritional Status of Preschool Children in Rural Philippines." (In these proceedings.)

[8]Winichajan, Pattanee, A Cassette-Tape Recorder Technique as An Approach to Nutrition Education of Rural Mothers in Northeast Thailand, Institute of Nutrition, Mahidol University, Bangkok, 1983. (Mimeograph)

Communication Planning for Effective Nutrition Programs

It is important to understand what the best media are for doing particular jobs. UNICEF's Project Support Communication Section in Bangkok has produced a Media Selection Wheel which matches media with communication ("learning") objectives. It also introduces various "selection factors" such as flexibility of use, equipment required, degree of initial and continuing costs, etc. to help planners make more careful decisions.

A worksheet for Media Selection (Illustration 8) provides a simple but systematic scheme for selecting different media. The communication specialist can list the criteria which are most important to the situation, taking into consideration the communication objectives, populations involved, the kinds of information to be communicated and such factors as speed required and geography to cover. Numbers can be used to indicate how well each of the media listed meets the criteria. There is no absolute numerical total that will tell which media to use, but this planning operation will assist in making the decision more rationally.

Illustration 8

WORKSHEET FOR MEDIA SELECTION

IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS	MEDIA							COMMENTS
	RADIO	TV	NEWSPAPER	MAGAZINE	POSTERS	FIELD WORKERS	OTHER(S)	
1. Accessibility to Ministry								
2. Accessibility to Population Segment								
3. Speed								
4. Control Over Final Message								
5. Appropriate for Population Segment								
6. Participation Possibilities								
7. Localization								
8. Cost								
9. Appropriate for Message Content								
10. Other(s)								

5. Themes/messages. The principal content for the communication program must be identified, and it must be authenticated by the proper technical specialists (for example, agronomists, nutritionists, etc.). At this stage of strategy formulation, it is usually enough to indicate the major themes that will be used, keeping in mind that it may be important to distinguish between messages designed to inform or reinforce (cognitive), those intended to move a person to action (motivational), and those essential for carrying out actions (behavioral).

It is important to be specific about three dimensions of the content. These are: (1) What is the overall "inventory" of information that audiences need to have to do what is expected of them? (2) How much of this do most of them already have? (3) What is the balance (i.e., the gap between 1 and 2)? This is the content that needs to be emphasized in laying out the strategy, remembering that even some of what is already known may need to be reviewed or used as an entry point for the newer material.

6. Schedule. The communication activities to be undertaken should be put into a general time-table. Scheduling of themes is influenced by various factors: the logical development of the overall message, e.g., awareness-motivation-behavior; circumstances of related sectors, e.g., the agricultural calendar, or distribution of health materials, or the deployment of community workers; etc. This time-table should be developed cooperatively with other sectors.

Illustration 9 is a worksheet for planning themes and media according to different periods in the overall program. Using the worksheet, the communication people can schedule particular themes for particular periods or phases of the program.

There are two "facilitating" strategies that need to be included with the overall communication strategy. These include (1) a plan for mobilizing resources and (2) a plan for doing formative evaluation (research). First, about resources. If radio broadcasts (or other media) are to be used, the questions need to be asked: Who will prepare them? How will the job be done? The attempt to answer these questions may suggest some resource needs: a

Illustration 9

SCHEDULING: MESSAGES/MEDIA

POPULATION 1	PERIOD 1					PERIOD 2			
	R	RS	P	FW	C	R	AC		IM
(Theme 1)									
(Theme 2)									
(Theme 3)									
(Theme 4)									

RS--Radio Spots P--Posters C--Cinema Advertisement AC--Audio Cassette

R--Radio Program FW--Field Workers IM--Indigenous Media

script writer, performers, recording facilities, money to purchase time, listening group leaders, or persuasive efforts applied to broadcast station officials, etc. These resources should be carefully calculated and provision be made for obtaining them before going into the implementation activities that require them. Anticipation of needed resources--from spare parts to training staff--will increase the chances of effective communication.

The formative evaluation plan must indicate how information on the communication efforts will be collected, processed, and fed back into the strategy or implementation phases.[9] Formative evaluation includes pre-testing of materials monitoring distribution, reception and reaction to materials, etc. These kinds of information are valuable if they are available at particular times; otherwise the information may only be collected, stored

[9]See the paper, "Evaluation Models for assessing Effects of Media-Based Nutrition Education," prepared by Dennis Foote prepared for the Bangkok workshop cited above.

and never used. Thus, it needs to be made explicit what data will be collected when, so its availability can be coordinated with various steps in the communication strategy and the implementation agenda.

The Remaining Steps

We have moved through the first two steps of the process suggested earlier (Illustration 5, page 7). The third step, implementation, is the most visible part of the communication sector's activities. It's where messages are designed, posters printed, cassettes distributed, etc. These details are vitally important, but of less concern to high level program officials than the more macro level planning and strategy process discussed earlier.[10]

Obviously, the program official will have an interest in both the implementation and summative evaluation phases, especially that they be carried out faithful to the strategy. The results of the summative (outcome) evaluation (Step 4)--if they are to be useful at all--need to be followed by an explicit statement as to future action to be taken (Step 5). How, for example, do the results influence the initiation or complexion of another strategy, or a decision to restate the communication problem?

Dealing with audiences and channels and messages may seem quite distant from issues such as nutrient deficiencies, diarrhea, and the weight-for-height charts that nutritionists may be more comfortable with, but it bears repeating that effective communication methods may be as vital to improving nutritional status of a population as a sanitary water supply or special formula supplements. That is why leaders of community or national nutrition programs must demand the kind of detailed planning for the communication sector as outline above. And this leads us to the third responsibility that nutrition officials have.

Mobilizing Resources

It is the rare agency that has all the resources it needs or wants to carry out its mission. The communication sector in a nutrition program is quite likely to suffer in resource allocations because microphones or cassette

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[10] See Jean E. Anderson's Bangkok paper for useful ideas on implementation: "The A-B-C Model for developing Communication to Change Behavior."

tapes or projectors seem less vital than vaccines, vitamins and medicines. In addition, the health and medical items are more visible symbols of health care services offered by the health establishment. If, however, nutrition program leaders have accepted and committed themselves to the first two responsibilities outlined above, it is imperative that they give higher priority than in the past to providing reasonable resources for communication activities.

Examination of budget allocations for nutrition and health education suggests that these kinds of activities tend to get token amounts of money, or what is left over after other needs have been met. One reason is that, in planning and budgeting activities, seldom are there advocates speaking as forcefully for the communication sector as those speaking for the medical, health and nutrition sectors and the conventional resources they require. If there is to be effective communication for nutrition in primary health programs, the medical doctors and nutrition experts who are most influential in allocation of resources will need to lobby for additional resources for communication, or increase the priority of communication resources in the competition for what overall support is available.

A final word about resources. More attention needs to be paid to the development of <u>human</u> communication resources within the nutrition establishment. It is a sad state of affairs when persons whose principal activity is based largely on communication have little professional training to do that kind of work. How frequently we find extension agents whose purpose is to persuade farmers to adopt new practices being given training largely in the technology of agriculture. They themselves learn about new cultivation techniques but are unable to creatively and effectively communicate the information to others.

Take the case of the national information, education and communication office of a family planning program in a Middle Eastern country. In order to tailor communication programs to local conditions, the central office invited its local officers to submit proposals for innitiating innovative projects at the local level. Few proposals were submitted, and few of those went beyond suggesting more money for refreshments for group meetings. Not a very

innovative approach to localization of communication! Closer examination revealed that "information specialists" in the local offices had virtually no communication training, either in planning and organizing communication programs, or in specific communication skills. Is the situation the same in nutrition? What is the balance between technical training and communication training for those persons who work directly with the public? Too frequently we expect that communication is "natural", and to have effective extension agents and nutrition aides it is only necessary to provide them with technical information.

What can be done? Nutrition and health officials need to initiate or support efforts to examine the job responsibilities of the people working in their programs to discover if and where communication plays a significant role in their activities. Does their successful performance depend on effective communication? This was done in Thailand, where the Ministry of Health now uses the phrase "village health communicator" to describe one of the two kinds of health volunteers working at the community level. The reexamination of job tasks should lead to a systematic effort--through in-service training of--upgrading health care workers' skills for communicating about nutrition and related topics. This should be a priority issue. Pre-service training also should be evaluated for its relevance to the demand for communicaiton skills in development-related activities.

In reviewing these three responsibilities for bringing about more effective communication for nutrition in primary health care, it should be clear that senior level health and nutrition professionals need not change the nature of their careers and become communication experts. But they do need to understand enough about what can be done with communication so that, in their influential positions, they can demand systematic, quality planning and performance from the communication sector, and, given the expectation that it is forthcoming, support resource allocations for both vitamins and video.

APPENDIX

SUMMARY CHART OF COMMUNICATION & EDUCATION TECHNIQUES*

Method	Main Advantages	Main Disadvantages	Comments
1. Public meetings and lectures	Easy to arrange. Reach many people. Can have more than one speaker. Create public interest and awareness. Stimulate follow-up discussions.	Audience is usually passive. Speakers may not understand audience's needs. Difficult to assess success. Audience might not learn the main points.	Handouts should be used. Presentation should be clear. Use visual aids when possible. Audience should be encouraged to raise questions and to participate. Speaker should establish two-way communication.
2. Group discussions	Build group consciousness. Individual members of the group can understand where each member stands in regard to the discussed issue: provide chances for exchanging opinions and increase tolerance and understanding.	Some members may dominate. Sometimes difficult to control or to keep focusing on the main issue.	Should be used with an interested audience to discuss a definite problem. Procedure should be flexible and informal. Summary of discussion should be presented at the end of discussion. Decision should be made by group members regarding its stand on the issue discussed. Requires the selection of good chairman.

*Adapted from: Reaching Rural Families in East Africa. Shawki M. Barghouti, PBFL/FAO NAIROBI 1973

Method	Main Advantage	Main Disadvantage	Comments
19. Video tape	Can provide both visual and aural information. Excellent motivational tool. Can supply comprehensive overview of an ongoing situation; can also supply clear demonstration of how to perform complicated task or series of tasks. Transmits a large quantity of information to both literate and illiterate people. Often perceived as a "glamourous" medium. High level of credibility. Easier to work with than film, yet shares film's vitality and versatility.	Relatively expensive medium; requires costly equipment to produce tapes and to present tapes to an audience. Presupposes a basic level of technical and organizational ability on the part of the producers. Good productions require adequate lead time. Video units themselves can be unwieldy and/or temperamental in certain adverse circumstances, such as extreme weather conditions and/or inaccessible locations. NOTE: The technical standard for video varies around the globe. This means that a program produced in one country may not be able to be played back in another country. International video efforts must take this into account.	Pre-production planning and consideration of audience needs and characteristics are critical. Most effective when supplemented with printed handouts reinforcing tape material. Possibilities for "creeping bias" in the editing process; producers must be aware that one picture can tell a thousand <u>different</u> stories to a thousand different people.

Method	Main Advantages	Main Disadvantages	Comments
3. Role playing	Facts and opinion can be presented from different viewpoints, especially in controversial issues. Can encourage people to reevaluate their stand on issues and can invite audience participation. Deepens group insight into personal relations.	Cannot be used in community meetings. Some role-players may feel upset by playing a role they do not agree with. Requires careful preparation for the selection of the issue and actors. Careful preparation is essential.	Can only be used in training courses. Follow-up discussion should focus on the issue rather than on actors' performances. Source material about the issue should be provided to the actors to prepare their arguments.
4. Drama	Groups can be active, "learning by doing." Can attract attention and stimulate thinking if situations are effectively dramatized.	Actors require attention in training and preparing script. Preparations might be too difficult for the field worker. Difficult to organize because it requires considerable skills and careful guidance by the field worker.	Should be restricted to one issue. Can only be used during training courses. Can be used as entertainment if well prepared before a public meeting.
5. Case study	Can illustrate a situation where audience can provide suggestions. Can elicit local initiative if the case corresponds to local problems.	Difficult to organize. Rewording of events and personalities might reduce the effectiveness of the case. Some audiences may not identify themselves with the case.	Should be clearly prepared. Can be used in training course. Questions and discussions should lead to recommendations for audience action. Audience should be encouraged to prepare case studies relevant to its experience.

Method	Main Advantages	Main Disadvantages	Comments
6. Home visit	Establish good personal relationships between field workers and families. Can provide information about rural families that cannot be collected otherwise. Encourages families to participate in public functions, demonstrations and group work.	Field worker cannot visit every family in the community. Only families in accessible localities can be visited.	Records should be kept for families visited. Schedule of home visits should be developed to assure allocation of time for field work activities. Handouts should be given to the families visited.
7. Demonstration	Participants can be active and learn by doing. Convinces the audience that things can easily be done. Establishes confidence in field worker's ability.	Requires preparation and careful selection of demonstration topic and place. Outside factors can affect demonstration results and consequently might affect confidence in field worker.	Demonstration processes should be rehearsed in advance. Audience should participate in the doing. Educational materials should be distributed to the participants at the end of the demonstration. Time and place of demonstration should be suitable for people to attend.
8. Radio, newspapers and television	Radio can be used to teach illiterates and literates. Newspapers can provide information within a short time for those who can read. Mass media can create awareness of issues and announce activities in this regard.	No visual aids can be used on radio. They can be used in newspapers and television. Media programs are always short. Regular mass media programs are one-way communication. Difficult to assess effects. Programs are usually prepared for national audience which reduces their relevance to local problems.	Mass media programs should be relevant to the problems of the local people. They are better utilized if combined with group discussion.

Method	Main Advantages	Main Disadvantages	Comments
9. Mass media group listening	Combines mass media and personal channels. Can be prepared and used for many audiences over a period of time. Encourages group participation.	Requires preparation for recruiting groups, training group leaders and preparation of educational material. Can be expensive.	Should be regularly held. Participants should be provided with educational material. Can be effective in enforcing literacy and adult education. Programs selected should be about local problems. Tape recorders can be used. They are flexible. Can be used to tape role-playing, group discussion and interviews with local personalities.
10. Blackboard	A flexible tool. Easy to make and to use. Can be very attractive if used properly. Use of colored chalks can add to its visual appeal. Can be portable.	Requires some manipulation skill (though quickly acquired). Requires teaching skills to make best use.	Should be essential in every group. Very useful for schematic summaries or talk or discussion. Audience can participate. Small blackboards can be portable. Writing should be clear and organized.
11. Flannelboard	Can be portable and mobile. Can be prepared by expert in advance: little skill required in actual operation. Could be used to make presentation more dynamic.	Can only be used for what it is prepared. Cannot adapt to changing interest of group. More elaborate equipment than ordinary blackboard. Difficult to keep up-to-date.	Very useful but only for the prepared talks. Audience can participate. It should be used step-by-step. Flannel materials should be stored properly for future use. Flannelgraphs should be numbered according to their order in the presentation.

Method	Main Advantages	Main Disadvantages	Comments
12. Bulletin board	Striking graphic, informative, flexible, replaces local newspapers. Keeps community up-to-date with information.	Requires preparation and attention to community needs.	Should be combined with maps, talks and photographs. Very suitable for posting articles, announcements and news of development in the community.
13. Flip charts (turnover charts)	Cheap and simple. Can be stopped at will for analysis. Can be prepared locally. Ideas could be illustrated in sequence. Illustrations on flip chart could be used many times for different audiences in different sessions.	Soon torn. Can only be seen by a few at a time. Can be difficult to illustrate complicated ideas.	Should not be overlooked for illustration of simple sequences--especially with small groups. Lectures should be prepared in advance for use on several occasions.
14. Films	Because of sight and sound can attract audience's attention. Can make great emotional appeal to large audiences.	Good films are rare. Equipment costly to buy and maintain. One-way communication unless properly used. Requires skill in running film projectors.	Best if combined with discussion groups. Much work to be done regarding getting good films made. Attention should be given in getting audience to evaluate the film. Films should be used for stimulating discussion rather than for teaching alone.

Method	Main Advantages	Main Disadvantages	Comments
15. Filmstrips	Much cheaper and easier to work than films. Easily made from local photographs. Encourage discussion.	Usually sight only. Not so dramatic as motion pictures. Could be expensive.	Can have recorded commentary. Strip can be cut up and individual pictures mounted as 2" slides: then can be selected and rearranged.
16. Slides	Have all the advantages of film strips plus more flexibility and can be more topical. They can be used in a series to illustrate a concept.	Could be expensive. Difficult to have them on all subjects of teaching.	They should be used after careful preparation of logical sequence and a good commentary.
17. Models, exhibitions and displays	Appeal to several senses. Can be used in various occasions and situations. Can illustrate ideas in detail.	Not many workers can build them or use them properly.	Useful models and exhibitions could be built up locally. Should be used in familiar places--centers.
18. Maps, charts and diagrams	Visual appeal. Should simplify details. Permit leisurely study: can develop sequence on display boards.	May mislead by oversimplicity. Create transport and storage problems.	Should be made especially for groups. May need careful explanation at first. Could be used as summary of information. Symbols and layout should be familiar to the audience.